

Comstock, G. Gay Theology Without Apology. Pilgrim Press, 1993.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Many of us use the Bible as a resource for developing our moral/ethical standards. If the Bible is, as Comstock says, a hierarchal and patriarchal book, can it have meaning for women today? If so, how?

Comstock seems to say that an attitude of “ministry to” others is immoral and that it only perpetuates the hierarchy and victimization. Is this true?

Comstock criticizes Jesus’ ministry as “incomplete” because it did not serve to break down all of the established patriarchy and social barriers. He is critical of the fact that all of the twelve disciples were men, and that early church fathers used this model to maintain the hierarchy and patriarchy. Comments?

What does the story of Vashti in the beginning of the book of Esther tell us about the power of the hierarchy.

A member of a gay Nazi organization was questioned about the very existence of such an organization. He indicated that this was no more a contradiction than being a gay Christian. What are the similarities?

Many of us base our moral/ethical standards on our concepts about Jesus, about his ministry, his death and resurrection, etc. Comstock seems to disbelieve the resurrection. He continues to refer to Jesus as dead. Would this view of Jesus’ resurrection change any of your personal moral/ethical concepts?

Comstock discusses the Exodus story as it deals with “the unacceptability of pain and suffering inflicted upon one person or people by another.” Often the people were afraid of freedom, and wanted to return to slavery in Egypt. This fear of freedom can be seen in a moral context. Why are we afraid of freedom, and in what ways do we reject freedom?



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## Credo

Chapter 8 appears to be Comstock's own moral credo. From the following principles he develops his moral theology which is contained in the earlier chapters of the book:

- (1) God is the mutuality and reciprocity in our relationships. God is among, between and part of us.
- (2) Sin is the abuse of power, and the exercise of dominance and submission.
- (3) We work out our salvation by: (A) Working for mutuality and against unequal power distribution; and (b) Developing and sharing our gifts, and enabling others to do the same.
- (4) The specialness of Jesus did not occur because he was set apart, but because he set himself among others.
- (5) Salvation does not depend upon Jesus (accepting/worshiping him). It comes from our relationships with others.
- (6) Community which encourages the development and sharing of everyone's gifts is the Holy Spirit.

